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WOODBURY COUNTY BRUCELLOSIS SURVEY

(This summary is based on a random survey of 229 farms in 14 townships.)

Four out of ten of the farmers in the survey did not know or gave no response to the question relative to the worst livestock disease in Woodbury County. Almost 3 out of 10 (28%) indicated Brucellosis as the most serious livestock disease in the county. The other diseases most frequently mentioned were erysipelas and hog cholera.

Almost half of the farmers (44%) thought that Brucellosis is the worst livestock disease in the United States. Two out of ten (18%) did not know or gave no response to this question.

More than 8 out of 10 (83%) of the farmers recognized that Brucellosis is also called Bang's disease in cattle and undulant fever or malta fever in humans. Fifteen percent did not know or gave no response to this question. Two percent said Brucellosis in cattle is not called undulant or malta fever in humans. More than 6 out of 10 (65%) recognized that the cow and hog types of Brucellosis are also human diseases.

Only 15% of the farmers are aware of the percent of the population in Iowa who have been exposed and infected with Brucellosis.

Eight out of ten (79%) of the farmers knew that undulant fever or malta fever hits farm people more often than city people. Seven out of ten (69%) knew that men are hit by this disease more often than women. Nearly one-third (31%) did not know this or thought that women were hit by the disease more often than men.

In regard to small children and the incidence of undulant fever, one-third thought that it seldom developed in them, one-third thought that it developed commonly in small children and one-third did not know about the effects of the disease on small children.

One-half of the farmers did not understand that Brucellosis or undulant fever in humans is not transmitted from other humans.

More than 8 out of 10 (84%) of the farmers knew that people who handle infected animals are apt to contract the disease from this source.

Poorly cooked meat was recognized as a potential source of infection by 57% of the group.

The fact that Brucellosis can be contracted from cattle more easily than tuberculosis was recognized by 64% of the farmers.

Only 1 out of 10 (10%) of the farmers recognized the goat type of Brucellosis to be the most serious or virulent type to humans. More than one-half (56%) thought that the cow type was more serious and one-fourth (25%) believed the hog type to be most virulent. Nine percent did not know or gave no response to this question.

One out of four (24%) of those questioned knew that the hog type of Brucellosis caused most human cases in Iowa. More than 6 out of 10 (66%) believed the cow type to be the cause of most human Brucellosis, while only 4% thought the goat type cause most human cases. No response or did not know appeared in 6% of the replies.

In response to the questions on symptoms of Brucellosis in humans nearly one-fourth (24%) recognized fever as one of the symptoms. More than 2 out of 10, (22%) said tiredness was a symptom, nearly 2 out of 10, (18%) knew that it was usually a long illness, headaches was indicated as a symptom in 12% of the replies while nervousness and acute illness were each listed by 7% of those responding. Five percent thought despondency was a symptom and five percent indicated they did not know or gave no response.

More than one-third, (36%) knew that the new antibiotics were effective in treating human Brucellosis. Five out of 10, (53%) did not know or gave no response while one out of ten, (11%) said that they were not effective as treatment.

Nearly three out of 10, (28%) knew that Brucellosis was contracted most often by handling hogs. Dairy products was indicated as a source of human infection in nearly one-half (45%) of the replies while nearly one-fourth (23%) of those questioned thought that handling cattle was the most frequent method of getting the disease. Only 4% gave other answers or did not know.

Four out of 10, (41%) knew that there is a simple test which can be used on milk and cream samples to show that there is Brucellosis infection in the dairy herd. Nearly 2 out of 10, (16%) said there was no simple test to show infection while nearly one-fourth (23%) did not know or gave no response.

Cases of human Brucellosis in local neighborhoods were reported by 3 out of 10 (32%) and 5 out of 10 (53%) reported knowledge of cases in Woodbury County. Four out of 10 did not know if there are cases in their neighborhoods or in the county.

The number of reported cases of human Brucellosis by the State Department of Health, in Woodbury County in 1950 was 15. Forty percent of the people who knew of cases in the county did not realize there were this many cases. The recent report from the State Department of Health indicated an increase of 33% in the number of reported cases in 1951.

Six percent of the families represented in this survey reported having had Brucellosis or undulant fever in their family. Five percent of the farmers in this survey say, symptoms of the disease have been identified and associated with members of their families.

Less than half of the families (48%) are drinking pasteurized milk and using dairy products from cows that are brucellosis free. More than one-third of the families (36%) report that members of their families are contacting animals that are infected or that they do not know whether or not they are infected.

Symptoms of brucellosis have been recognized by 1 out of ten of the farmers raising cattle on their farms. Two out of ten do not know or gave no response to whether they had symptoms of Brucellosis in their herd in the last 5 years.

Blood testing of cattle for Brucellosis has been done by 4 out of 10 (41%) of the farmers but only 44% of the group who have tested had done it as recently as 1950. All the others who have tested have done it before 1950. Of those who tested 8 out of 10 (82%) reported that they did not have any reactors. Reactors were removed from the farm by 75% of the farmers who reported reactors.

Calves between the ages of 6 to 8 months are being vaccinated by 12% of the farmers. There is an average of 6 calves this age per farm in this survey and two of these calves have been tested. This would indicate that farmers with large herds are vaccinating more commonly than the small herd owners.

Sixty-five percent of the calves that have been tested have been officially vaccinated, tattooed and reported.

Nearly 8 out of 10 (78%) of the cattle farmers are interested in removing Brucellosis from their herds. Forty-five percent of these farmers have already taken some steps to eliminate Brucellosis from their herds.

Cattle brought on to a farm that have not been tested should be isolated from native cattle is the thinking of three-fourths of the farmers.

Seven percent of the farmers surveyed do not raise hogs. Of the farmers who are raising hogs seven percent have had symptoms of Brucellosis in their herds. The purchase of boars from Brucellosis-free herds is practiced by 37 percent of the farmers. Only 21 percent of the farmers producing and selling breeding stock are positive about their herds being Bang's free.

Five percent of the farms in this survey are without cattle. The average number of cattle on the farms with cattle are 6 heifers, 7 cows and 19 steers. The beef breeds comprise 45% of the cattle, dairy breeds 21% and mixed breeds 34%. The average number of sows per farm on which hogs are raised is 15.

Seventy-four percent of the farmers indicated they are in favor of free vaccination testing and indemnities similar to the tuberculosis eradication program. Almost 8 out of 10 (79%) of the farmers favor a law governing the movement of cattle in the state.

When asked what the biggest problem in the minds of people that is preventing or will prevent a program of Brucellosis eradication and control the most frequently mentioned was, "lack of information regarding the seriousness and importance of the disease."



